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BLESSEDNESS
OF

CHRISTIANS after Death,

WITH THE

CHARACTER

OF THE

Right Honourable, and Right Reverend Father in God,

HENRY COMPTON, D. D.

Late Lord Bishop of LONDON.

Deliver'd in a

SERMON at St. Martin's in the Fields,
July the 19th, 1713.

By JOHN COCKBURN, D. D. X

*Published at the Desire of the Reverend Dr. Lancaster,
and the Gentlemen of the Vestry.*

L O N D O N,

Printed for George Straban at the Golden Ball over-against
the Royal Exchange in Cornhill. 1713.

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Right Honourable and Right Reverend Father in God

HENRY CAMPBELL, D.D.

Late Lord of LONDON.



Delivered in a

SERMON at St Martin's in the Fields

July the 10th 1713

By JOHN COCKBURN, D.D.

Published at the Desire of the Reverend Dr. Lancelotti,
and the Gentlemen of the Society.

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REV. XIV. 13.

And I heard a Voice from Heaven saying unto me, write, Blessed are the Dead which die in the Lord, from henceforth, yea saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labors, and their works do follow them.

THAT there is a State after this Life, the Wise and Sober Heathens were inclined to believe: But they neither could prove it clearly, nor yet give a distinct Account of it. This Discovery is owing to Divine Revelation, and particularly to the Gospel. For by It we are both assured of another Life, and also instructed in the Nature of it. And among many Texts which set forth those Important Points so plainly, as to leave no doubt or suspicion of their Certainty; this just now read is one. For in it you may observe first a future State clearly intimated and asserted, by saying, *Blessed are the Dead*; for how could the Dead be blessed, if there was no other Life? If Men ceas'd to be, or were entirely annihilated at Death, they indeed could not be called miserable, but neither could they be called happy: For if no other Life, then all the happiness we are capable of is in this, which we lose by Death. In that case the Living may be happy, but the Dead cannot. But if any Dead be blessed, then it must follow that they survive even Death it self; that they are only dead to us, because they appear no more here; but yet they live. And that there are some Dead blessed is certain, because a Voice from Heaven has proclaimed it, and commanded to be written for our Instruction. Nothing is or can be false which comes from Heaven, and so there must be another Life

after this, seeing here, as in many other places it is declared by Divine Authority : This point I shall pursue no farther at present, because it is an undebatable Article of the Christian Faith and is supported by evident Reasons and clear Demonstrations.

2. This Text gives the Character of those who shall be blessed when Dead, *viz. They who die in the Lord.* All the Dead are not blessed, nor is the Blessedness hereafter a meer chance, as Men's good fortune on Earth is supposed by them, who believe not a God or Providence. No, the Blessedness of the other World is the certain Lot of some, from which others are totally excluded. The Blessedness of the other Life, is not the effect of some lucky Hit, nor is it got by the Interest of Friends, nor is it the purchase of Mony, nor the Reward of personal Merit. None are blessed, but *the Dead that die in the Lord*, that is they who depart this Life in the Interest, in the Service, and in the favour of God ; they who before they left this World have had fellowship with God through Jesus Christ, by a true Faith, unfeigned Repentance, and sincere Love to God and Charity to Men. These are they who die in the Lord, and these are blessed. But as for the wicked, *They are turned into Hell and all the People that forget God.*

3. Here is set forth the nature of that Blessedness which is promised and assured to them who thus die in the Lord, which consists in three particulars. 1. That their Blessedness commences instantly after their Death. 2. *That they rest from their Labors.* 3. *That their Works do follow them.* These things I shall God willing now Discourse to.

1. First, Their Blessedness commences presently after Death. This is evident from this Text, because it is said *from hence forth.* The Original imports instantly, from the very hour and moment that they die in the Lord. Nor is this the only Text on which this comfortable Doctrine may be built, for first in the Old Testament, it is insinuated by representing Death under the Figure of Sleep, which sets one at perfect Rest and Ease. The Prophet *Isaiab* delivers it more expressly thus, *The Righteous perisheth, and no Man layeth it to heart ; and merciful Men are taken away, none considering that the righteous are taken away from*

ared by at pre Faith ions. e blessed ead are nce, a believe World exclu ffect o, nor is Merit that is ce, and Worl y a true nd Char d these to Hel which i which mmen eir La I shal Death hence our and y Tex t in the der th The ous pe len an a wa from

from the evil to come, he shall enter into peace, they shall rest in their beds, each one walking in his uprightness, or as it may be otherwise rendred before God. Is. lvii. 1, 2. Here the Prophet plainly declares, that when Evil is determined and at the point of being executed, God removeth Righteous and Merciful Men, out of kindness to them, that they may not have the grief or trouble either to see it or feel it. This is sufficient ground for believing that at the same time they are put into some better State: But to give full assurance of it, he adds, *they enter into Peace*, which according to the Hebrew Dialect signifies true happiness, perfect contentment and satisfaction. Again he says, *they rest in their beds*, but that this may not be thought a dull unactive Rest, a total cessation of the senses and reasonable faculties, which renders one insensible of both Good and Evil, he subjoins *each one walking in his uprightness or before God.* This Text is very remarkable, it proves the Revelation of another Life to those who lived under the Law, which is denied by some ignorantly and inadvertently, as by others perversly. Let not any be offended at so severe a Censure, I know some are of this Opinion who bear a figure among the Learned. But Errors and Vices must not be flatter'd or soothed, because of those who follow and countenance them. Nor is this Error so small as some may think, for it is Derogatory to God, it detracts from the Wisdom and Perfection of the Patriarchs and Prophets, and it contradicts not only St. Paul but Christ himself. As this Text of *Isaiah* proves the Revelation of another Life under the Law, so it shews that good and holy Men immediatly after Death entered into a State of Bliss.

2. This is more clearly set forth in the Gospel, as first in the Parable of *Lazarus* and the rich Man, *Luke xvi.* where it is said, *and it came to pass that the Beggar died, and was carried by the Angels into Abrahams bosom.* This alludes to the Custom at Feasts and Entertainments in those Days, where ones Head lay on anothers Breast or Bosom; and by this is meant that poor *Lazarus*, as soon as he died, was carried by Angels to the Participation of those heavenly Delights, and of that Happiness which *Abraham* the Friend of God and the Father of the Faithful enjoy'd.

Again

Again, our Lords Answer to the Thief upon the Cross makes out this; *Verily I say unto thee, to day shalt thou be with me in Paradise*, Luke xxiii. 43. This Passage proves the matter so clearly, that to elude the force of it, some alter the Punctuation of the Words, and would have *to day* to refer not to the time of his *being* in Paradise, but to the time of pronouncing these words, as if 'twas no more than *verily I to day speak to you, that sometime or other you shall be with me in Paradise*, which as it is contrary to the general current of Interpreters Antient and Modern, and to all the Antient Translations; so it is such a violent stretch, as destroys the Scope and End of that Reply to the Penitent Thief, and which dwindles almost into just nothing, that Comfort which our Lord intended to him who so miraculously believed in him. These words cannot be understood according to the purpose, but when they are considered both as a tacit Grant of that wonderful Believers Request, and also as giving a Sign of its being granted. For it is as if our Lord had said, *thou wouldst have me to remember thee when I come to my Kingdom, yes I assure thee I will, and for a Sign I tell thee, that this very day which is now so near a close, thou shalt be with me in Paradise*. Therefore the Ethiopick Version has it, *truly I say unto thee further or moreover, that is, above what you ask, that thou shalt be with me this very day in Paradise*, and Castalio renders it, *hoc tibi Confirmo, bodie mecum eris in paradiso*, that is, *I assure you of that, for thou shalt be with me in Paradise this very day*.

3. This Point is declared very clearly by the Apostle St. Paul 2 Cor. v. 1. *For we know, that if our earthly House of this Tabernacle were dissolved, we have a Building of God, an House not made with hands, eternal in the Heavens*. These words plainly intimate that the Faithful shall be lodged in a heavenly Tabernacle, as soon as their earthly House is dissolved: For that which the Apostle has an Eye to in this place, is not that final perfect State which we look for after the Resurrection and Day of Judgment, but that intermediat State from Death to the Resurrection, as appears from v. 6. and 8. where he saith, *knowing that whilest we are at home in the Body, we are absent from the Lord, and*
willing

willing rather to be absent from the Body, and to be present with the Lord.

4. This is confirmed by what *St. Paul* saith, *Phil. i. 23. I am in a strait betwixt two, having a desire to depart, and to be with Christ which is far better*, by which Words it appears, that true faithful Christians are with Christ, so soon as they leave this Life; otherwise all Strait betwixt the Desire of Living and Dying is only Fancy and Ignorance; for there can be no real or reasonable Cause for deliberating about the Choice or Preference. What reason to desire to depart, if our Departure hence did not bring us nearer to Christ, more in his Presence, and in greater Fellowship with him? *St. Paul's* Earnestness to be dissolved, was not from Weakness of Mind, or Peevishness of Spirit, or because his outward Circumstances were uneasy, which is the only reason why some hate Life, wish Death and make away with themselves. Even *Cato* did it not from nobler or better Principles; for he would have spared his Life, if he had had the Courage to sustain a Shock of Fortune, to behold *Cesar* a Conqueror, and himself levelled to a Subject: But the Apostle gloried more in his Sufferings, than any can do in his Honours, Dignities and Preferments; He had learned to be content in every Condition, He was not uneasy in his Mind, nor so weary of his Life, as to think it altogether despicable: He had inward Peace and Joy, which the World could not rob him of, and greater than any the World could give him; and therefore only desired to depart this Life, as one would pass from an inferiour to a superiour State, from a lesser to a greater Conveniency and Happiness; and consequently his desiring to depart, assures us, that he knew he would be instantly possess'd of Blessedness, by a fuller Enjoyment of Christ his Lord.

But some will perhaps object, that *St. Paul* might know that it would be so with him, and therefore had reason to wish to depart. But are the Privileges of Apostles to be expected by every common Christian? I will not answer this, by denying all Distinction of Persons, or different Degrees of Glory in the other World; for there are divers Texts, which both insinuate, and

and in a manner assert it, as there are very good Reasons for it ; nor will this Distinction, or these different Degrees, breed any Confusion, or raise any Emulation or Murmuring among these Spirits of just Men made perfect ; for as far as the Lord's Presence goes, there is Fulness of Joy ; and so all of every Order and Degree, shall have Fulness of Satisfaction, and shall behold the peculiar Distinction and Privilege of some with Admiration and Delight, seeing it does not diminish their Joy and Glory. No doubt the first Place is given to the Apostles and Prophets, and to those who turn others to Righteousness, whom *Daniel* says, *(shall shine as Stars in the Firmament,* that is, they shall be as Stars of the first Magnitude, tho' not the only Persons that shall be glorified. There are Orders and Degrees among the Angels, but even the lowest Order has all desirable Happiness ; so tho' there be a Distinction of righteous Persons, yet all shall see God, all shall be made like him, all who believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, all who die in him, and are justified by him, shall undoubtedly partake of that Heavenly Glory and Blessedness ; therefore you see the Apostle in that forecited Place *2 Cor. V. 1.* speaks generally in the Name of all common Christians and Believers, for he says not I, but *we groan earnestly.*

5. If true Christians did not enter on the Possession of true Blessedness immediately after Death, they should be at a loss by dying, Death would be no Gain to them, as *St. Paul* supposes it would be to him *Phil. 1. 21.* Then those who died before from the Beginning of the World, as all who shall dye any considerable time before the End of it, would be miserable, because so long depriv'd of their Hopes and Rewards. If Christ be not more enjoyed after Death, then Death does not make them who die in the Lord more blessed; for tho' the Communion which Saints and Believers have with Christ in this Life, be not perfect, yet it gives them *a Peace which passes all Understanding, a Joy unspeakable, and full of glory.* It does not make them altogether insensible of Crosses and Afflictions, but it works a Contempt of them, it makes them Proof against all the Evil and Prejudice, which naturally follow them, and it puts more Gladness into their Hearts, than any can have by Corn, Wine or Oil, or the greatest

for greatest abundance of earthly Things; so that their State here is better than that in the other World betwixt Death and the Resurrection, if then there be no greater Communion with Christ, nor more Satisfaction upon it, and consequently their Death is no Act of particular Kindness, but rather a Punishment which is very absurd.

Thus I have proved fully the Truth of the first Point proposed, that the Blessedness of them who dye in the Lord commenceth immediately after Death.

2. The Second Thing set before us here, is the Nature of this Blessedness, which first is *a Rest from their Labours*.

Labour and Burden is a Common Metaphor in Scripture, as well as other Authors, for any kind of Trouble or Misery. So then, when it is said, that *they shall rest from their Labours*, the Meaning is, that they shall be free from all manner of Trouble, that they shall not feel the Pressures and Grievances of this World any more, nor any thing else which may vex or fret them, or put them to Pain or Grief. Here *Man is born to trouble, as the Sparks fly upwards*. And as the Son of Sirach says, *Great Travel is created for every Man, and an heavy Yoke is upon the Sons of Adam, from the Day that they go out of their Mother's Womb, till the Day that they return to the Mother of all things. Their Imagination of things to come, and the Day of Death trouble their Thoughts, and cause Fear of Heart: From him that sitteth on a Throne of Glory, unto him that is humbled in Earth and Ashes; from him that weareth purple and a Crown, unto him that is cloathed with a Linnen Frock. Wrath and Envy, Trouble and Unquietness, Fear of Death, Anger, Strife, and in the time of Rest upon his Bed his Night Sleep do change his Knowledge, a little or nothing is his Rest, and afterwards he is in his Sleep, as in a Day of keeping Watch, troubled in the Vision of his Heart, as if he were escaped out of a Battel, &c. Eccles. 40. 1.* Thus all Men as Men, and as Inhabitants of this World, are lyable to divers Calamities; for sometimes there are frightful Commotions of the Elements, which compose the natural and material World; at other times the Civil State is shaken and turned upside down; and by both these so

many particular Chances and Changes do happen, that none can have true Security, or perfect Peace. The best State in this World has a Mixture of Evil in it ; so that all here have their Labours and Burdens of one kind or another, and all are less or more disquieted. But besides these common Calamities of Mankind, they that fear the Lord and believe his Word, have proper Labours which do not affect others ; for they are sometimes persecuted for the Faith and keeping a good Conscience ; and they do always struggle with the Vices of the World, and with their own inherent Corruption. *Many, saith the Psalmist, are the troubles of the righteous, and the godly, saith St. Paul, are appointed to Afflictions.* But that is only here in this Life, for hereafter they shall rest from all their Labours ; so when this Life ends, all their Sorrow and Trouble ends too : When they remove hence, they wrestle neither with Principalities and Powers, nor with evil Spirits or evil Men ; for that State into which they are received is always calm and quiet, nor is there any Disposition among the Spirits which dwell in it, to molest one another either secretly or openly. In a word, none of the Evils of this Life happen there, nor any thing which can give the least Disturbance or Vexation ; therefore it is written, *God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes, and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain, for the former things are passed away,* as it is Rev. 21. 4.

Further it is certain, that immediately after Death there is Rest to the Godly ; for that State, into which they are carried, is quite different from this present. It is of another nature, and must be free of Trouble, because that which is the Cause of all Evil and Trouble here, has no Place there. These Briars and Thorns which are in every way we go, and in every Field we walk, were produc'd by Sin, and it is on that account they are continued and suffered to abound so much. But Sin entrenches not into that blessed State prepared for the Faithful hereafter. They that dye in the Lord have neither Guilt nor Sin : Not Guilt, because they are justified and washed in the Blood of the Lamb, which makes them white as Snow ; and with the mortal Body of Flesh, they also put off the Body of Sin, and all its Members

Inclinations and Affections. Being therefore both justified and purified, there can be no more occasion for either severe Punishments or fatherly Chastisements, and consequently there must be a pure Rest from all Labours, none of which had ever been laid upon us, unless for Sin.

But then again, the Happiness of that State after Death does not consist in a bare or simple Rest from Labours; for that is but Part or half Happiness, or rather only a necessary Preparation to it: Indeed Indolency is requisite, but something besides is necessary to render one blessed. Health is most valuable, and he who is in perfect Health we call happy: But it is only comparatively in respect of the Sick and Diseased; for Health alone without other Comforts would not rejoyce the Heart, nor satisfy the Soul: Indeed without Health all the Advantages of this World are insipid, and of little use: But neither does Health make us easy, unless there be more or less of other Enjoyments. So if those who dye in the Lord be blessed, there must be something more done to them, than to put them into a State, free of Pain, Trouble, Sorrow or Misery: Their Rest must not be a dull Repose, without either Action or actual Enjoyment; their Rest must be such as they are said to have, who having escap'd a dreadful and dangerous Storm, return to their Friends, who welcome them with Joy and chearful Entertainments; as a King who returns victorious from a grievous War, having subdued his Enemies and establish'd a Peace, which procures him Honour, Ease and Plenty. Their Rest is attended with true Pleasure; they are made to rest from their Labours, that they may enjoy freely and fully those pure and spiritual Delights, which a holy Soul is capable of, but which cannot be so enjoyed in this present Life. Their Rest is as that of *Lazarus* in *Abraham's* Bosom, where he did not sleep, but was comforted with good things, because of those evil he formerly received. Their Condition is like that of the Prodigal, after his Return to his Father's House, where not only his former Shame and Misery ceased, but where he had all that his Heart could wish. They are both delivered from their Trouble, and also comforted for all

all the Days in which they were afflicted ; therefore it is said that *their Works follow them*.

3. This is the Third Instance of their Blessedness, which also compleats it.

Now the Works which are said to follow them, are those which elsewhere are called the Works of the Lord, which St. Paul exhorts every one to abound in, *viz.* Those Works or good Deeds which he commands, that are agreeable to his Holy Nature and Will, that are done for, and really tend to his Praise and Glory, and which are for the Good and Honour of his Church, and the Comfort of his Servants, during their Pilgrimage on Earth ; some of them are mention'd in the preceding Verse, *viz. patience, keeping the commandments, and the faith of Jesus*. These are not to be disjoined but kept together ; and who carefully observe these, will not be barren and unfruitful, but will bear much Fruit, and shew many good Works. The Faith of Jesus is not a mere Speculation floating in the Brain ; it is a warm fervent and active Principle, which sets all the Powers and Faculties a working ; He that truly believes is not idle, He doth not fold his Hands, sit still and only talk ; He is diligent and industrious, and always exerting himself to the utmost to please his Lord, and to do good unto Men. Nor doth he labour in vain, for he has Divine Assistance to enable him to work, and all his Works follow him : By this is meant the true Remembrance of them, and the reaping the Fruit of them. When *Dorcas* died, the Widows and others about her, shewed to *Peter*, the Coats and Garments which she wrought for the Poor, They told him how she was full of good Works and Alms-deeds, which mov'd him to exert his miraculous Power to bring her to Life. So when the faithful Servants of God depart this Life, the Book of Remembrance is opened, in which their Works are Registred ; their own Guardian Angels receive them, and present them to God with an Account of their Faith and Piety ; they declare their unfeigned Faith, their sincere Repentance, their joyful Hope, their large and true Charity, their ardent Zeal, their fervent Prayers, their devout Attendance on God's Word and Ordinances, their Patience when they

is said they themselves suffered, and their Compassion towards the Affliction of others, their Victory over the Devil, the World and the Flesh, and all the other Acts of their Holy Obedience. And the Angels of those whom they relieved, assisted, and did any good to, do also bear witness, and joyn effectually in recommending them to God and to Jesus Christ, for which they are approved, and appointed the Rewards of well-doing. Then they see to their unspeakable Comfort, that the Lord is faithful, and that all are blessed who believe. Then they take their Place in the Assembly of the First-born, and enter upon the Possession of those good Things, which God has laid up for them that love him. They are led to the Tree of Life in the midst of the Paradise of God, and by the Fruit of that Tree, they are secured from the Second Death. In the mean time, there is given unto them to eat of the *bidden Manna, and a white stone and a new name, which no man knoweth, save he who receiveth it.* They get a surprizing and a comfortable View of God, and have clear Notions of his infinite Perfections. They behold Jesus the Author and Finisher of their Faith sitting at the right hand, from whence he shines upon them by the Rays of his Glory. They then are made sensible of the pure, perfect and spiritual Delights which a Soul is capable of, and feel them to transcend far all the Pleasures of the Body. O! what a great and sudden Change is wrought upon them that dye in the Lord! if a Child when born had the perfect Use of Sense and Reason, how would it be transported at the difference betwixt its former dark, narrow, and uneasy Confinement, and this spacious World! what Raptures wou'd it have in beholding the Light, and all those beautiful Objects, with which this World is adorned: But as the Paradise on the other side the Grave is infinitely better than any State here, it exceeds all our present Notions; so who can express or imagine the Joy, the ravishing Transports which a Soul must have upon its Translation thither! O how blessed are they who see themselves far out of the Reach of any Evil! who are encompass'd with the highest Expressions of Divine Love, and are entertain'd with the Praise and Rejoycings of Holy Angels! what Pleasure must it be to reflect on the Wisdom, the Certainty, and

and the Profit of their past Choice of God ! what Joy to see that they have neither lived nor laboured in vain ! what Contentment to behold sure and plentiful Provisions of Eternal Felicity ! what Satisfaction must there be in the Enjoyment of a present State, which exceeds all their former Conceptions, and yet at the same time to have an assured Expectation of a greater ! For tho' this State into which the Faithful enter, presently after Death, be as has been proved a State of Blessedness, yet we look for a greater Blessedness after the Resurrection ; because then, and not till then, are given the great and final Rewards promised in Scripture. Thus you see the Truth and Meaning of the Text, and by what hath been said you may understand the Blessedness of them that dye in the Lord.

I crave leave to draw some Inferences. And

First, What has been said does evidently make void the Doctrine of Purgatory imposed by the Church of *Rome*, and which was made an Article of Faith by the Council of *Trent* ; if all who dye in the Lord be immediately blessed, and if all of them rest instantly from their Labours, then certainly no scorching Flames, nor grievous Pain, nor Torments can touch them. Purgatory is inconsistent with this Text, as with all the others that speak of the State of Departed Souls. Nor is there any one Text of true Canonical Scripture, which could suggest it to any not prepossess'd before-hand. Nay, it is as little favoured by Tradition as by Scripture, I mean true Catholick Tradition, according to the Standart of *Vincentius, Lyrinensis*, namely, *quod ab omnibus, quod ubique, quod semper*. The first and purest Ages of the Church knew nothing of Purgatory. It only crept into the later Ages, when Ignorance prevail'd by mistaking some unwary or doubtful Expressions of the Antient Fathers, which some cunning Persons encourag'd, to support some gainful Practices.

Secondly, as the true Sense and Illustration of this Text destroys the Doctrine of Purgatory, and consequently the Infalibility of the Church of *Rome* ; so it clearly shews the Error of the Socinians, concerning the State of Souls until the Resurrection ; for they cast the Soul after Death into a profound Sleep,

Sleep, which renders it both unactive and insensible of either Pain or Pleasure. If it was so the Voice from Heaven said not true, that *blessed are the dead who dye in the Lord from henceforth* : For certainly Blessedness supposes both the Happiness of ones State and Circumstances, and also the true Sense of it. But they make little of gainsaying Scripture. And their Notions both in this, and other particulars are as inconsistent with true Philosophy and Reason, as with Scripture. For both these and this teach that the Soul is distinct from the Body, that the Death of the Body does not annihilate or destroy the Soul, that the Soul may and can live in a separate State. And if it be not actually annihilated, it must think and have actual Sensations ; for Inaction and Insensibility is altogether inconsistent with the Existence of a Spirit or Rational Being. There can be no such thing as a Souls sleeping properly, for when the Soul ceases to think or perceive it must also cease to be. Wherefore if we reason from the nature of a Soul, we are oblig'd to conclude, that the Soul may subsist after Death, and also be sensible of its State and Circumstances. And if we believe the Scripture, we can neither deny the Souls Existence after Death, nor the immediate happiness of them who die in the Lord. To listen to the Socinians, is to forsake the Scripture, and also to quit the guidance of true Philosophy.

Thirdly, That which has been delivered from this Text, may shew us how to decide the Question, whether the Souls of Believers do immediatly go to Heaven ? This is debated among Protestants, and was also among the Antient Fathers : Some held the Negative, and others the affirmative, and what if both say true ? This will be no Paradox, for when the matter is sufficiently cleared, they will be found to speak the same thing, and both agreeably to Scripture ; so that all the difference betwixt them is in the acceptation of some Words and Phrases, which one understands strictly, and the other in all their Latitude. For they who say that the Souls of the Faithful do immediatly after Death pass into Heaven, do not deny that they shall be in a different State after the Resurrection of the Body. Nor do they deny their present immediate blessedness, who say that

that they go not to Heaven till the last Day of Judgment. Are there not degrees of Glory, and different States of Blessedness? and may not the lowest be called Heaven truly both in Comparison of this World, and also with respect to the real effects and consequences of it. This intermediate State into which the Faithful are received at Death is Heaven, as the Suburbs of a City is usually called the City, and where one may also both behold and partake of the Splendor and Plenty of the City. In this State they are glorified, but yet have not all the glory that is promised. Our highest Thoughts of Heaven at present, are certainly short of the Felicity and Glory of this intermediate State, where the Soul, while it is without the Body, shall have all Content and Satisfaction. But as the Resurrection of the Body is both certain and evident, so then the State of the Righteous shall be changed, and they shall be further advanc'd into another somewhat better, and yet more glorious: For the last Dispensations are always most glorious. Nor indeed is it suitable to distribute final Rewards till the Day of solemn Judgment be past. The State immediately after Death, is not as this Life, a State of Purgation or Tryal: It is not in Danger to be lost, nor is it a State of Hope only; for there is true certain Fruition in it; but we know, because it is clearly revealed, that it is to be succeeded by another, and therefore also by something which exceeds it in Glory. Wherefore certainly the Souls of those *who dye in the Lord* are immediately blest, and do presently enter into Paradise, which is one part of Heaven; they are taken within the outer Courts of that Temple of God which is above, and which gives them both true and full Joy at present: But it does not seem proper, and therefore not reasonable to think, that they should enter into the holiest of Holies, till all things be fulfilled and concluded. When the Number of the Elect is completed, then they are all cloathed in white, and crowned, and led together unto the Throne of God, and then it is that they receive all the Promises in all their Fulness and Perfection.

Fourthly, The Prospect of this After-state, of them who dye in the Lord, clears the whole OEconomy of God, and removes all Objections against his Providence. Look back from
this,

Are this, and you shall be sensible of the wonderful Wisdom of his Contrivances, of the admirable Reason of his various Dispensations to the Children of Men, and why so many evil and bitter things are given here to the pious and faithful; for now it is clear that this does not happen, because God neglects them, and takes no care of them; but that having their evil things in this Life, they may be prepared and qualified for those unspeakable Comforts hereafter.

By this we have a convincing Proof of the Wisdom and Profitableness of Piety and Religion, which some are at great Pains to run down, and others slight and mock at. You who judge all Believers credulous Fools, and who reckon all to be simple that are pious, be advised to contemplate their State on the other side the Grave, and then tell me who are the wise Men, and who the Fools of this World? Who does best, he that mortifies the Flesh, or he that pampers it? He that forsakes the Pleasure of Sin which are only for a Season, or he that indulges them to his Eternal Sorrow? He that gives himself to Piety, or he that follows his Lusts? The covetous Worldling, or he that is liberal and charitable? Whether is the Fate of *Lazarus*, or that of the Rich Glutton most desirable? Who now can deny the Reasonableness of believing *Moses* and the Prophets, and of giving our selves up to the Guidance of Christ and his Apostles? For if we follow them, they will lead us when we remove hence to true perfect and eternal Blessedness: Whereas if we refuse to hearken unto them in this World, we shall have no Friends in the other, but shall be left to groan in Misery to all Eternity.

Fifthly, This Doctrine is to be remembered to make us easy, when Death approacheth to us. We see Death is unavoidable. None can be so foolish as to think to escape it, and what other Comfort against Death, than this which the Text gives? If we cannot lay hold on this, Death is terrible, and we may tremble at its Approaches. But if we sincerely believe in Christ, repent of our Sins, and can say that we have walked before God with a perfect Heart, and have endeavor'd to do that which is good in his Sight, then we should rejoyce at Death, as an Heir when he comes to be of Age, and is to be invested with the Honours

and Inheritance of his Family. Indeed at Death we must part with this World and all that we have here, and why should we not do it chearfully? What reason to regard this Stuff? When in Exchange we receive an *Inheritance immortal, incorruptible, undefiled*, and which lies in *Heaven*, that is not lyable to *Revolutions and Changes*. There is now no Reason to be disquieted with the Fear of Death. On the contrary, we should always live in the joyful Expectation of it; and therefore all our Care should be to live well, to walk holily, to do good, and to be rich in good Works, that we may have the Comfort of *dying in the Lord*, and so of being eternally blessed.

Finally, That which has been said, should be remembred to abate our Grief, at the Departure of our dear Friends and Relations, if there be ground enough for Charity to believe and hope that they have died in the Lord: Some Tears are natural, and therefore allowable when we must part with those we love: But excessive Sorrow, is from too great Selfishness, or it shews that our Faith is weak, and that we do not act and carry ourselves suitably and consequentially to our Faith and Profession. Indeed the Death of a wicked Man is sad and deplorable: But the Death of the Righteous is true matter of Rejoycing. Would it be reasonable to mourn and tear the Hair, because our Friend is delivered from the Gout or Stone, or because he has escap'd a Storm and was got safe a shore? It is not much more reasonable, to grieve immoderately for the Death of true and sincere Christians; for them whom we have reason to hope were reconciled to God by Faith and true Repentance with the Fruits of good Works, seeing by their Death they are delivered from Vanity and Vexation of Spirit, and entred upon true Blessedness: Wherefore St. Paul saith, *I would not have you to be ignorant brethren, concerning them who are asleep, that ye sorrow not even as others which have no hope*, 1 Thess. iv. 13. according to which, our Church ordereth to commit the Body of our fellow Christians to the Earth, with giving of Thanks to God, *for that it hath pleased him to deliver them out of the miseries of this life*.

These are useful and comfortable Meditations at all times. And I have judg'd them proper now that it hath pleased God to
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take out of this Life, that most worthy Prelate who has govern'd this important See of *London*, so long even for Thirty Eight Years, and that too with great Honour and Uprightness. If we regard our selves and our present Interest there is Reason to deplore the loss of him. But on his account like true Believers and Christians we should rejoyce, being well assured that he is only Translated to greater Honour and Happiness, the undoubted Reward of his Piety and good Deeds: These will be had in everlasting Remembrance before God. And therefore they should not be buried in Oblivion by us, who had the Benefit of them. Certainly they ought to be written and preserved for doing just honour to his Memory, and for exciting our Imitation, that following his Example we may also when our appointed time is come, be thought worthy to enter into that blessed State, where we hope and believe he now is.

Though this good Man out of his great Humility ordered himself to be buried with all privacy, yet Justice and Gratitude require to take leave of him with suitable Honour and Respect. And therefore I judge it most proper to make an honourable mention of him, here in a Church of which he was Patron, and of which he had always a paternal Care. I wish that the *Reverend Doctor* of this Church was here, for he would be fitter to draw his Character. But seeing Providence has honoured me with this opportunity, I very gladly lay hold on it to make you sensible of what a Blessing he was to this Church, and that I may express my own just esteem of him, and my grateful sense of the particular obligations I lay under. Nor shall my affection transport me to undue Excesses, or to fulsome Flattery which is too common on such occasions. I shall only lay before you some few just things which I know by the honour of near Twenty Years Acquaintance, and of somewhat more than an ordinary Intimacy.

His Birth made him Honourable; for his Family is one of the first, and best, and most Illustrious in the Kingdom. And his Father the Earl of *Northampton* was an Eminent Person, who will be ever honoured in History. Yet this is the least part of the Bishops Character. Certainly Quality ought to be honoured, but there are other things more honourable, as Virtue, Pi-

ety, Knowledge, and Generosity. These are preferable to bare Quality : But yet it cannot be denied, that they also are more Illustrious when joyned to it as here : Even as *Solomon* observes, that *Wisdom is good with an Inheritance.*

Quality in this Person was not defaced by Vices, nor debased by a mean Spirit ; for He possessed such greatness of mind as made him abhor what was fordid, and to relish only that which was Virtuous and Praise-worthy.

Some if they can pretend any Relation to a Family, or have any Ancestor to boast of, they are lifted up above measure, they are swelled with Pride, they keep at a contemptuous distance, and look upon Inferiors with disdain, as if they were another Species of Men, who could not pretend to the same Nature, neither were equal in all things substantial and essential. But this Prelate was clothed with Humility, which rendred him affable, courteous, of easy access, and ready to receive the Applications of the meanest Person : So that He was not more a Gentleman by Birth, than by his generous Temper, his noble Endowments, and well-bred Behavior, which pay'd due Respect to all, and was never shocking to any. Nor was his familiar way of treating all prejudicial to himself, by exposing him to Affronts ; for it was manag'd with such Prudence and Discretion, as did oblige all to carry towards him with suitable Respect and Veneration.

When this most Worthy Person took upon him the Office of a Bishop, and especially when he accepted the See of *London*, he might have taken *St. Paul's Motto, Not yours but you*, which becomes a true Pastor, and puts him in mind of the end of his Office. For he came not into this great Post, with intention to enrich himself, but to do good to the Souls and Bodies of others. He did not study his own Gain and Profit, nor indulge his Ease, nor seek his private Repose. But he had before him the publick good of Church and State, and considered what might be for the Advantage of this City and Diocese, and so set himself with all Zeal to promote the same. For this cause he visited his Diocese often, Preached and Confirmed every where, and actively and industriously defended by his Learning and Authority, as he recommended by his Example the Doctrine, the Worship, and Constitution of our Church, that those who were unhappily gone
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astray might be Reclaimed, and others preserv'd in the good old Right Apostolical Way. And therefore also he had a watchful Eye over all Errors, and did carefully advert to the several Arts and Means of propagating them ; for obviating which, he employed fit Instruments and put them upon proper and effectual Methods.

His Zeal for our Church and Religion was constant, and came not by fits and starts. He was not High and Low, Warm and Remiss as it suited with the Times, and was agreeable to the humours of either Court or People. But as Truth changeth not, so he always adhered to it, however it was applauded, or whatsoever inconveniency it brought to himself. He scorn'd to be meanly obsequious to Persons or Parties ; but as became an Overseer of God's House, he joyned Men and regarded them, as he perceived their Inclinations to the Church and Protestant Religion, which he would never forego to serve any other Interest. He was no small Favourite of that Prince which advanc'd him to this high Post of *London*, and tho' he was told by some about him, which I learn'd from himself, what secret Inclinations that Prince had to the Roman Catholick Religion, yet he was not shaken in his Resolutions, neither would forbear a zealous opposition to that false Religion ; as he was not over-awed by the open Profession and avowed Designs of the Prince who succeeded. But in both Reigns, without either fear or fainting, he maintain'd the true establish'd Religion of this Church, employing and encouraging the ablest Pens to undertake the Defence of It, and to expose the contrary Errors ; by which means the People were guarded, and both the cunning artful Practices and bold Attempts of the Enemy were defeated.

And as this good Bishop had a true Zeal against the Corruptions of the Church of *Rome*, so he distinguish'd judiciously betwixt the Innovations and Corruptions of that Church, and the Remainders of pure and primitive Antiquity which were to be found there. His Zeal was guided with Knowledge and Discretion, and so was always kept within its due bounds. He did not as some suffer an aversion to Popery, to run into Fanaticism, and to beget a dislike of all Antiquity, Order, Decency, and well composed Forms, which as experience shews can only se-
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cure against Innovations, and preserve the Purity of Faith and Worship. And therefore as became a wise and good Man, he withstood all other Dissenters as well as Papists, knowing that our Church, Religion, and Constitution, both Civil and Ecclesiastical were in Danger by them as much as the other. For this cause, he ordered his Clergy to instruct their People clearly about these matters, to remove their Prejudices, and to detect the Errors of these Disturbers of our *Zion* and *Jerusalem*. And certainly if Scripture, if Reason, if Learning and good Sense be sufficient to stop Mens Mouthes, these Herds of Gain-sayers might have ceased their bellowing long ago; and if Truth and Conviction were that which they aim'd at, they would have surrendred themselves; for these were given to the full, by the many excellent Discourses and Treatises which on this occasion were written and published, by the Advice and at the Command of this good and faithful Bishop. And he put others upon writing because he had no leisure himself, not because he could not do it; for by his several Charges to his Clergy and his Conferences with them, it appears that if he would he could write on any Subject as learnedly and effectually as any.

While I take notice of his opposition to the other Adversaries of our Faith and Religion, I ought not to pass over in silence his true abhorrency of Socinianism, which he shewed on all occasions. And the few words he ordered to be put upon his Gravestone, are a plain and publick Declaration that he judg'd this Heresy Damnable, and the Truths it struck at most precious, because the sure Foundation of all Comforts. I have often heard him regret those Defects of our Discipline which bound up the Hands of Bishops, and rendred the Censuring Hereticks slow and difficult. But to compensate this in some measure, he shewed all Marks of his private Displeasure to such as were tainted with these Errors, and he avoided all fellowship with them.

Thus it may appear that like a true Pastor, he both gave the Example of a true sound Faith, and also endeavoured to preserve others in the same.

And as this most venerable Prelate was zealous for sound Doctrine, a pure and uncorrupted Faith; so He was no less zealous for good Works. He did not place Religion in

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dry Notions or barren Speculations, nor did He think a Set of Orthodox Principles alone, would glorify God or recommend him to his Favour; therefore he would not give himself up to a mere contemplative Life, which is fruitless. He judg'd rightly, that 'twas a Sin in a publick Person to shut himself up like a Recluse, and to decline the Uneasiness and Fatigue of Business. *Whosoever, saith our Lord, would be great, let him be your minister, and whosoever would be chief, let him be your servant.* Wherefore as soon as this excellent Person came into this High and Honourable Station of *London*, He owned the Obligations to an active Life, and accordingly was most industrious in doing all the good he was capable of. His Door was open at all Hours to them who depended on him, and had to do with him; He received their Applications kindly, he did not weary them with frequent and unnecessary Attendance, but performed speedily what he promised and did undertake if in his own Power. He himself devised many useful and generous things, as He was always ready to receive whatever was offered by others. There needed nothing to engage him to any Project, but a Conviction that it was good. Being once perswaded of this, He entred with a hearty Resolution, and was not discouraged with Difficulties, nor diverted by political Consideration, tho' he could spy and foresee them as soon as any Man. But that which depended upon himself was done without any unnecessary Delay; and what he could not effectuate by himself, he consider'd whose Concurrence was necessary to have it done: And for this cause, he never wearied, nor spared any pains, but went up and down continually soliciting Persons to forward what he believed was for the Honour of God, the Service of Religion, the publick Good, or the generous Relief of particular Persons. This was not agreeable to selfish and narrow-soul'd Men, who therefore conspir'd to misrepresent him, for Eclipsing his Influence.

None was more given to Hospitality. His House was open and free to all sorts of Men. There the Rich and Great were honourably entertain'd, that he might gently oblige them to adhere to the true publick Interest of Church and State, and also to favour his pious Undertakings and generous Applications.

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And there the Poor and Needy were plentifully refreshed: For like *Job* he *never eat his morsel alone*, but did distribute his Bread liberally, nor did there pass any Day in which he had not *the blessing of him that was ready to perish*.

As the Charity Schools are most beneficial to the Publick, no less than to the Children educated in them, so he was a great Encourager of them; and did also give Education to not a few Sons of Clergy-men and decayed Gentlemen. This he did secretly, because his Motive was not Ostentation and vain Glory; but now it ought to be proclaimed openly for an Example unto others. He did not like too many, only resolve on good Works, but put off the doing them till they are leaving the World. His good Works are not to be learn'd from his Will; for he did all in his Life, and left nothing to be done after his Death, but that which could not be done before: And indeed it is some matter of Wonder that he was able to do so much. Among other good Deeds he propos'd to himself, there was that one of augmenting poor Livings for the greater Encouragement of them who serv'd them. And to give an Example to others, he purchas'd an Impropriation in *Essex*, and from the Time of the Purchase, the Clergy-man who serv'd the Cure receiv'd all the Profits; for he would not pretend the Common Saying that *Charity begins at home*, tho' many in his Circumstances would have us'd it. The perpetual Annexation of this Impropriation to the Church, was made sure by his Will in case of sudden Death: But not long ago he made it over by a legal and formal Deed, to which I my self was a Witness. He is a chearful Giver who gives in his own time. But he who still hoards up, and parts with nothing till Death, is to be suspected of doing it even then grudgingly, and only because he can keep it no longer.

It would take up a longer time than is here allowed, to remember all his good Deeds, all the Instances of his Piety towards God, and all the Acts of his good Will towards Men, whether near or far off, Strangers or Acquaintance. For he was a Father and a Friend to all, and he laid to Heart the Necessities and Circumstances, bodily and spiritual, of those who were even in the remotest Corners of the Earth. His Charity was universal, and his good Will as extensive as Mankind.

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They were not confin'd and pent up to Kindred, Nations or Parties ; but they only respected Merit, and Necessity : He honoured Merit where-ever he perceived it, and his Bowels earned upon all necessitous Objects whencesoever they came. It is true his Goodness was sometimes abused, and he was engag'd to concern himself with some who did not much deserve it : For he was not nicely cautious, and not having leasure to examine strictly every ones Pretences, he trusted too much to the Recommendation of others ; and he has complain'd to my self, that he has been impos'd upon by some who were least to be suspected, and whom any other would have trusted as well as himself. However there was no Reason to object this so much, as some did, who yet had less regard to true Merit. And there was less reason to entertain a Prejudice against all he recommended because of some Instances : For he was far from an Indifferency whether good or bad Men were prefer'd, and when there was an Opportunity given him, he could discern them as well as any. It was to have been wish'd that this good Man had been a little more upon his Guard. But it is almost impossible for great Men and publick Persons to keep themselves free altogether from the Misfortune of such Errors and Mistakes. And very often great Caution and Fears of being imposed upon, are only Pretences for hiding the Want of good Inclinations, which abounded in our most worthy Prelate.

As this Man was ready to do good to all, and like a true Christian sensibly affected with the Circumstances of every private Person : So none could be more concern'd for the Publick, or more desirous of its Prosperity and Welfare. Wherefore he was most zealous to preserve the Constitution of Church and State, and no less jealous of all Innovations, whatever specious Pretences were made for them ; for he believed, as Experience has shewed, that they would not be for the better. Accordingly in all Reigns he boldly Remonstrated against all the Alterations of the Constitution which he saw intended. And his great Post setting him near the Person of the Prince, he never fail'd to lay hold on the Opportunity of declaring his Sentiments freely of all measures under Consideration, without either Flattery or Respect of Persons, which is very rarely down by Courtiers.

This was not always acceptable, and I have known him advised to forbear it, because prejudicial to himself, and not answering the End for which he did it. But his Answer was, that 'twas his Duty to discharge his Conscience, to offer the Prince good and impartial Advice, and to prevent evil or rectify it. If his Endeavours made little Impression at present, they might have some good Effect afterwards: And if he was in the least instrumental of any publick Good, he valued not how much he was despised, nor how contemptibly others spake of him: This shewed not only Humility and Self-denial, but a truly great Mind which could not be overcome, but which would persist in that which is good whatever be the Effect. It is the Misfortune of Princes that commonly those about them are altogether for themselves, and do mind the Publick only for a blind: But this good Man was mostly, or rather altogether for the Publick, which interfering with the private Aims of some, made them his Enemies, and put them upon Arts for begetting Prejudices in the several Princes against him, and for diverting the just Esteem, which otherwise they would and ought to have had for one who minded their Honour and true Interest as much as could be wish'd, which Our Present Gracious Sovereign was abundantly sensible of, as She testified it by a distinguishing Respect to the very last.

Thus it appears, that this was a truly good Man, but I do not say an absolutely perfect Man; for there is no such Person on Earth. What is amiss ought not to be justified in any, nor yet should one be deny'd his true Praise, because of a few Failings. There are Blots upon the great Men on Record in Scripture, and all even the best since have had Weaknesses and Slips, which ought not to be remembered for encouraging Detraction and Evil-speaking, nor yet should they be pretended as Excuses for any Miscarriage: But they should be considered as Demonstrations of the Universal Degeneracy and Depravation of Human Nature, and also as a great Encouragement to set about rectifying it in our selves, seeing Men of like Passions and Infirmities have subdued the Body of Sin and advanc'd to great Degrees of Perfection, which they did by the Grace and Spirit of God, which every one may likewise obtain who ask it in Faith and Sincerity.

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To return to our most excellent Prelate, it is evident that he was a publick and common Blessing to this Nation : And tho' we were not worthy of him, yet it pleas'd God to continue him long with us, for his Life was prolonged till the utmost Period of Fourscore Years, which few go beyond, and not many attain to : As it is rare to have Sense, Memory and Judgment continued so long as this excellent Person had, with an unusual measure of Health and Strength until the last : So that tho' he was full of Years, yet he did not feel the Burden of Old Age so much as others commonly do. Whatever Strangers might think, and some others out of Design might report, those who convers'd daily and intimately with him, were not sensible of any considerable Decay of Memory, or other Intellectuals. He always spoke slow but very sure, and tho' he might take a little more time to deliver himself than some others, yet few did speak more home or better to the purpose. And to the very last his Letters were accurately penn'd, having a Laconick Conciseness which was very expressive. And he could not only express himself well in his Native Tongue, but also equally well in French and Italian, which was proper to his great Post, and very useful to Strangers. His Health was sometimes intermitted with the Gout and Stone, which he endured with Christian Courage and Patience. Not long ago he had a Fall, which threatned sudden Death : But he recovered to the Admiration of all, and it seem'd that thereby his *Youth was renewed as the Eagles* to use the Psalmist Phrase ; so that those who depended on him and wish'd his Life, flattered themselves that he would yet see many good Days, and be able to do them good. But he did not flatter himself, nor put off the Thoughts of Death, and so was neither damp'd nor surpriz'd, when he was taken ill again. He look'd upon this last Illness as the Approaches of Death, which he received chearfully, and was displeas'd when any about him talk'd of his Recovery, and offer'd to set Death at a greater distance.

While in perfect Health and Vigour, he thought on Death and prepared for it, and so like a wise and good Man he set his House in Order, and gave Directions about his Burial, which shew'd his great Humility, and how little he affected the pomp and Vanity of this World. For he ordered his Body to be laid
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in the Church-yard of any Parish where he should happen to dye, and that there should be only a plain Stone over the Grave, with these few Greek Words taken from Gal. VI. 14. *ἐν τῷ σταυρῷ*, that is, *in the Cross only*. Now how simple these Words may seem, they are more emphatical and instructive than the most pompous Inscriptions of the most magnificent Monuments. For these Words speak the true serious Sentiments of his own Mind, and they point, at what should take up our Thoughts most. They declare that he believed Christ Crucified to be *the Power of God and the Wisdom of God*, and consequently the source of all Comfort. This Holy Man believed that *when Jesus suffered Death upon the Cross, he opened the Kingdom of Heaven to all Believers*; therefore he knew nothing to be gloried in, either in Life or Death, save the Cross of Christ, because it qualifyeth for Eternal Life. And he would have this mark'd on his Grave-stone, not out of Vanity, but to teach all that pass by, what they should esteem most, even with St. Paul, *to count all things but loss and dung to the knowledge of Jesus Christ and him Crucified*.

If this good Man had affected Fame, and would have left it to his Friends: and if they would have, according to custom, for the honour of Themselves and Family erected a sumptuous Monument, there was Subject enough for an ample and elegant Inscription. For he might have been set forth as a Divine, with all true Theological Learning; as a Philosopher skill'd in the Knowledge of Nature, but especially of Botany; as an Historian, well read in antient and modern History; as a States-man, understanding perfectly the State and Government of his own Nation, and also of all Neighbouring States, their several Interests, and how they did interfere, and how they might be adjusted; as an Ornament of the present Age, having all great and noble Endowments; as a true Pattern to all that are elevated to Dignities, shewing the true Use and Advantages of them. But he modestly and humbly desired to go out of the World with the simple Character of a Christian. And I not intending a full and complete Character of this great and eminent Person, not being sufficient for it, as it could not be done upon a Day's Warning: I therefore have only touched some few things as are proper for the Pulpit, and which are fit to be imitated by all, especially those in high Stations, to render them truly Useful and Illustrious. Therefore to conclude, let us think upon this great Man, when as our Church requireth, we *bleſs God's holy Name for all his Servants departed this Life in his true Faith and Fear*, and let us pray also for Grace to follow this good Example as well as others. Now unto Him who is the Author of all Good, even to God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, be all Glory and Praise for ever. Amen.